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1./INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. Foreign Minister Oscar Camilion publicly charged that an anti-Argentine campaign is being conducted in the United States with Jacobo Timerman as its agent. Camilion, who sought the press out to make his charges June 26, reportedly stated that "the campaign against Argentina is built around Mr. Timerman, who is its agent and at the same time the center of an operation that has overshot its original objectives, the Argentine Government, and now attacks the Argentine nation." END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

2. (U) Camilion expressed particular concern about a U.S.

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TV broadcast of June 25 which "overstepped the bounds of the reasonable and the tolerable...mention of concentration camps is worthy of comparison to the techniques of Goebbels." Camilion, who reportedly was visibly angry, went on to say that "the reiteration of such charges can have a serious impact on US public opinion, although the US Government has all the elements for knowing the truth. What is being done in the United States is an attack on the Argentine nation...the grotesque and slippery technique being used is totalitarian...and was the venom that was [redacted] injected into the peoples of the West and produced a hecatomb (holocaust)."

3. (U) Camilion reportedly also stated that "We accept the rules of the game of America's democracy but nobody can stop us from expressing our concern and protest in the exercise of the most legitimate right of self-defense."

4. (U) The press reports that Foreign Ministry sources stated that the Foreign Minister had called in the US Charge to discuss these same concerns earlier that day.

5. (U) Only one paper, thus far, has probed the issues raised by Timerman and his allies in any depth. "La Prensa" accompanied its report of Camilion's

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remarks with, among other things, comments from different members of the local Jewish community. Mario Gorenstein, the President of DAIA, for example, stated that, "the opinions of Timerman have not been well received by the Jewish community, in general. We are convinced that the origin of his detention was not in the fact he is a Jew. Some incidents during his detention had the flavor of anti-semitism, but this is all." On the other hand, American Rabbi Marshall Meyer, a long-time resident of Buenos Aires to whom Timerman dedicates his book, told the paper, "Why don't we focus on real issues. Who is befouling Argentina's image? Those who tortured Timerman or Timerman?"

6. (C) COMMENT. It was inevitable that the US debate on the Argentine human rights situation and on the condition of the Argentine Jewish community would become ensnared with Argentine nationalism. Camilion has made this connection explicit, but he did not invent it. More likely, the Foreign Minister made his private demarche and his public comments with his eye carefully fixed on the Argentine military. He may hope to slow down the reaction to Timerman's charges in those quarters and/or, more pragmatically to show the military that he and his Ministry are on

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7. (C) The comments of Gorenstein reflect generalized attitudes in the leadership of the Argentine Jewish community. Though that leadership is sometimes accused by foreigners of being intimidated, we note that the June 28 issue of "La Prensa" carries a DAIA message of support for the paper in its current embroglio with the government, as well as for its assaulted columnist, Manfred Shoenfeld.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES

June 9, 1981

Timerman Shows That 'Authoritarian Generals' Are Keepers, Captives Of a 'Totalitarian Beast'

By Robert Cox

CAMBRIDGE, Mass — Jacobo Timerman, expelled from Argentina and stripped of his citizenship and most of his property by the military regime, is demonstrating that writing well is the best revenge.

In a searing document, his book "Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number," he has revealed the secret world of terror in Argentina. The book is so powerful that he has achieved something I thought impossible: He has made the people of the United States care about Argentina.

Etching in blood, sweat, and tears the torture he underwent in mind, body, and soul, through a year's imprisonment and subsequent house arrest for a total period in captivity of 30 months, he has grabbed public opinion by the scruff of its neck and taken it to where the totalitarian beast lives.

Mr. Timerman has torn off the flimsy veil of respectability with which the upholders of the new orthodoxy in United States foreign policy hoped to dress up the Argentine regime. The smiling authoritarian generals have been revealed in his book, and in a series of dramatic news-media encounters, as the keepers and the captives of the totalitarian beast that lurks in the darkness of the security forces where Nazism lived on after World War II.

It is a new kind of totalitarianism. It does not strut. It skulks. There are no swastikas on armbands for public view. No mass rallies or ranting speeches. The dreaded symbols — the portraits of Hitler — are kept for the torture chambers and cell blocks, where only the prisoners, victims of the new fascism, can see them.

Mr. Timerman has revealed the nature of the regime. Can a regime that has sent at least 6,000, probably 10,000, and maybe more people through secret death camps be described as *authoritarian*? When the torturer turns up the voltage because he has a Jew on the bedsprings, or a guard gives another Jew a methodical kick every time he passes his bound form, are these acts merely characteristics of "a moderately repressive regime?"

Clearly, Mr. Timerman must be discredited. Otherwise, the pretty little theory that, for foreign policy purposes, the world can be divided up into clear categories, goes by the board. The new orthdoxy under which tyrannies that appear to be anti-Communist can be euphemistically described as authoritarian is dangerous for the United States and the world because it demands witting or unwitting self-deception.

To consider the Argentine Government authoritarian denies reality. If labels must be applied, Argentina could best be described as feudalistic and anarchic; it is divided by the rivalries of the separate fiefdoms represented by the armed forces, with their various free-wheeling intelligence services and the beleaguered, powerless Presidency. The tragedy stems from the fact that central authority, and the responsibility that goes with it, has never been established by the moderates in the military who have held nominal power since the March 1976 coup.

Self-delusion in Argentina is understandable. In a country cowed by justified fear, it is safer to hope for the best and to pray that the moderates will eventually win out and establish the moderately repressive regime that the new United States foreign policy orthodoxy would like to persuade us already exists.

It is *unmasked reality, not misleading jargon*, that United States foreign policy must address — this is the message that public opinion has extracted from Mr. Timerman's testimony. The reservations expressed about Mr. Timerman by defenders of the doctrine that would make the distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian regimes crucial to the Administration's human rights policy are irrelevant to the central issue of Mr. Timerman's revealed truth. But if some lobbyist seems to be working up a campaign of character assassination by feeding understandable doubts, I would like to try to clear up some of these peripheral questions.

Like most people with more than a passing aquaintance with Argentina, I too was astonished that in his book Jacobo Timerman made no mention of David Graiver, who was his friend and financial backer at La Opinión, the daily newpaper that Mr. Timerman published. Mr. Graiver, who is reported to have died in a plane crash in Mexico in 1976, has been accused of acting as a financial agent for the left-wing terrorists called the Montoneros, and most of his close relatives are still in jail in Argentina. The military has never revealed what has been proved against Mr. Gravier and the charge against him remains in the realms of supposition, no more reliable nor damaging than the rumor that the current President, Lieut. Gen. Roberto Viola, was given a gold watch by Mr. Graiver. If the military would make public the results of its investigations into Mr. Gravier's activities, the sewer of slander and libel that has sullied many prominent Argentines would be cleared up and the country would be healthier. The truth is that the allegation that Mr. Graiver handled the terrorists' blood money led the Nazi-minded hardliners in the military to the conviction that there was a Jewish-Marxist-liberal (in the Argentine sense, a liberal is a civilized conservative) conspiracy linking all their enemies. Mr. Timerman was kidnapped when this collective psychosis was at its height, and scores of completely innocent and some very eminent people disappeared for a short time. Mr. Timerman, although all charges against him were dropped, remained in prison, where he was probably unaware of the intensity of the smear campaign launched against him because of his perfectly legitimate relationship with Mr. Graiver.

Another charge against Mr. Timerman is that he exaggerates. His critics call his torturers thugs, as though they were unrepresentative. Yet, he says he saw Gen. Carlos Suarez Mason, then the commander of the most powerful military garrison, watching a torture session. I can vouch for the lunatic fervor with which Mr. Timerman's tormentors pursued their anti-Semitic quest for proof of the Jewish-conspiracy theory because I was close to his family throughout his ordeal and what they told me then coincides completely with the account in the book.

Mr. Timerman's political views, which have always been "parlor pink," seem to be as annoying to the right as Aleksandr I. Solzenhitsyn's majestic moralizing is to the left. But Mr. Timerman emerges as a committed democrat and as a profound humanist. He is a man who has always, as far as I know, had an equal loathing for all forms of totalitarianism. I have never heard him call any left-wing totalitarian regime authoritarian, for example.

The totalitarian nature of the military regime will prevent his book and his message, which is that the respect for human rights transcends ideology, from reaching the Argentine people. The worst form of censorship — self-suppression — has been imposed by state terrorism for five years. So the Argentine people will remain ignorant of the fact that the true rulers are the men who run the clandestine jails and operate torture machines. Even the decent but weak military leaders at the top seem to live in fear of the creatures of the Argentine netherworld.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 1981

Mark Podwal

A few days ago, I received a letter from a couple whose son was kidnapped by security forces in August 1979. About a dozen young people disappeared then, but this was a case with a difference. The young people were allowed to telephone from their secret jails from time to time and to write letters to their families. Two young mothers among the kidnapped were allowed one day to visit their children. These communications continued until March 1980, and then stopped abruptly. Before I left Argentina, at the end of 1979, I tried to use quiet diplomacy on behalf of the missing young people. I spoke to the interior minister, the army's secretary general, even the President, Lieut. Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla. I left lists of their names and the circumstances of their abductions with top Government officials. I published nothing because the families believed that the Government and military leaders would transfer their children from the secret death camps to the law courts, military or civil, if they were allowed to do so without publicity. One couple concluded that their son has been murdered. Now they have asked me to publicize the case. I will not name them because I fear that they might be driven from Argentina or murdered by the real totalitarian rulers.

Can Washington afford to support a regime that — three years after the defeat of left-wing terrorism, in a country that has not suffered a major left-wing terrorist attack since late 1979 — has the built-in instability of secret killers loose in its security organizations?

If an authoritarian Government is established, the pros and cons of the "K Doctrine" (for Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, its originator) can be debated. Mr. Timerman's ideology of concern for human rights and opposition to both leftist and rightist totalitarianism is, after all, based on a compelling experience of evil whose very horror lies in the fact that no authority in Argentina will even acknowledge its existence.

Robert Cox, on leave of absence as editor in chief of The Buenos Aires Herald, has just completed a Nieman fellowship at Harvard University.

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